

OBSERVATIONS

On the means of extending the Consumption of British Callicoes, Muslins and other Cotton Goods, and of giving pecuniary Aids to the Manufacturers, under circumstances of the highest Respectability and Advantage.

Humbly offered to the Consideration of the Owners of Cotton Mills and Callico and Muslin Manufacturers in Great Britain, by the Delegates acting in their Behalf, and for their Interest, in London.

IN the course of a laborious investigation, which has occupied the attention of the British Delegates nearly three months in London, many important facts have been brought forward, relative to the extent and importance of the Cotton Manufactory, which will doubtless prove extremely beneficial.

The nation at large are now apprized of its magnitude, and the consequent benefits which must result from every arrangement which can support and nourish this inestimable branch of trade.

Its astonishing progress can best be ascertained by an accurate knowledge of the application of the raw material of Cotton Wool; which furnishes the most incontestible proof, that this Manufacture has extended during the last three years, in a ratio almost incredible *.

This important fact suggested to the minds of the British Delegates, the absolute necessity of finding new channels of consumption, and of devising means by which a more extended sale could be promoted, so as to keep alive those powers of machinery which have been so beneficially disseminated all over the country; and to continue in employment the numerous bodies of men, women, and children, who are trained and training to this business.

* Cotton Wool, left for the Manufactures, after deducting the consumption, in 1784 lbs. 3,950,000

<i>Exportation</i>	1785	—	6,000,000
	1786	—	6,500,000
	1787	—	7,500,000

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To promote this important object, the Delegates have been unwearied in their endeavours to procure certain restrictions upon the trade of the East India Company, for the purpose of augmenting the consumption. — They have succeeded in part, and have by means of the exertions which have been used, and the extensive information which has been collected, the fairest prospect of further advantages next Session of Parliament.

But after every thing is obtained that can reasonably be expected, *and that it is possible to obtain*, by restraints upon the trade of the East India Company; still additional facilities, as well as new channels of consumption, are indispensibly necessary, in order to prevent this Manufacture from languishing, and to alleviate those distresses which have already burst upon the country.

It has therefore been the object of the Delegates to find those facilities, and, if possible, to suggest such expedients as would extend the sale, by opening new markets for the British Callicoes and Mullins; and hence arose the idea of a General Hall, or receptacle for British Cotton Goods in the City

of London, under a conception, that the East India Company had great advantages over the home Manufactures, by means of those public sales, which brought their Goods under the review of all the great buyers in Europe, while the similar articles of the British Manufacture were in a manner hid and unseen, in a great number of different Warehouses in London; limiting the Proprietor to tedious, in place of quick sales, and reducing many industrious Members of the State to great distress, by subjecting them to the rapacity of those money-lenders who take advantage of the necessity of others, by purchases greatly under the first cost.—By subjecting them also to the double risque of loss, not only by the failure of the debtors, but also by the insolvency of the agents themselves; too fatally experienced of late, to the great distress and ruin of many industrious individuals, who suffer under the pressure of a growing calamity.

To rescue the trade from this evil—To devise a scheme by which the goods of the British Manufacturers could be thrown into the consumption at the least possible expence, and under circumstances of the greatest credit

dit and advantage ; much exertion has been used to persuade a few individuals of high respectability, to step forward upon the present occasion, for the relief of the Manufacturers, and to employ a part of the great property which they possess, in supporting the credit of the country, at the present crisis, by immediate pecuniary aids ; and to carry into execution a system of permanent benefit, through the medium of an institution, by which the Callicoes and Muslins of Great Britain could be brought under the review of all Europe, under circumstances where they would find their true level, and where the Manufacturer would be no longer compelled to become a speculator in his own goods.

These respectable individuals, to their immortal honour, have agreed to come forward on the present occasion, with a capital of *half a million sterling*, to be applied to the sole purposes of giving pecuniary aids to the Manufacturers, under circumstances which shall establish the utmost confidence in the management, and which shall also give the most perfect security to the public, that this capital shall not be diverted to any purpose

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of speculation injurious to the country, but for the sole benefit of the Manufacturers, upon the following

P L A N:

1. That a General Hall and Warehouses shall be established in London, for the collection and sale by auction, at four stated periods in the year, of British Callicoes, Muslins, and Cotton Mixtures; under such restraints as Government shall chuse to impose, by regulations to be inserted in a Charter, to be granted for that purpose.

2. That as soon as goods are lodged in any of the Warehouses belonging to the Hall, a certain advance of not less than one half of the estimated value shall be made in money; but at present, on account of the great distress of the Manufacturers, the advance shall be two thirds of the value.

3. That one month previous to each sale, Catalogues shall be published, in different languages, (of all the goods then lodged) and sent to every part of Europe, in order to invite purchasers; and every exertion used by the Managers that shall prove beneficial to the interest of the proprietors,

4. That

4. That, for this purpose, it shall be incumbent on the Managers of the proposed Institution, to procure at all times accurate information, as to the species and quality of the goods in different countries, which are likely to be most in demand; and to communicate the same to the Manufacturers, that they may at all times know the taste and fashions of Europe, and be enabled to judge how to regulate their Manufactures, as to the species of goods most likely to be in demand for the time being.

5. That the proprietors of the proposed hall shall at their own proper expence find *warehouses for depositing the goods, a general hall for sales, with necessary offices and other apartments,* together with *clerks, porters, labourers, agents foreign and domestic,* and every other expence, from the period when goods are lodged until sold, at a commission of 6d. in the pound, in full (insurance from fire and postages excepted).

6. That where goods are lodged at the general hall by any Manufacturer, who finds afterwards that he can obtain a better price, he shall be at liberty to withdraw the same, on paying one per cent. provided notice is given before the catalogue is published.

7: That

7. That on paying the like commission of one per cent. it shall also be in the power of a Manufacturer, to order his goods to be bought in, and to lie over, until the next sale, if such goods should consist of articles that are in little demand at the time; and this privilege to be granted, notwithstanding the advance of money.

8. That the Managers of the General Hall shall be obliged to liquidate, state, and finish all accounts of sale, and accounts current, and to transmit the same to the Manufacturers quarterly; within one week after the prompt is paid, charging interest on the pecuniary advances, at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, and paying the balances, by a remittance to a point.

9. That the whole bales and packages shall be open for the inspection of the purchasers, three weeks previous to each sale. That the names of the proprietors shall be concealed, if directions are received for that purpose; and such arrangements made as shall be found to be most advantageous, and generally acceptable to the trade at large.

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10. That the goods shall be sold at the General Hall by the catalogue, upon which the intended purchasers shall have previously made their remarks. That an advance of 25 per cent. shall be paid by each purchaser on the day of sale, and the prompt to be limited to one month, when the goods shall be taken away.

11. That patterns of every species of British Cotton Goods and Mixtures, and particularly all new fancy articles, shall be kept and exhibited at the Hall, that Foreigners may acquire a knowledge of their quality and price, in order the more effectually to promote a vend all over the World.

12. That Patterns also of every species of Foreign Cotton Goods shall be procured and kept at the Hall, for the information of the Manufacturers, and to give them a knowledge of the fabrics and qualities of such unknown articles as are likely to find a sale in foreign countries.

13. To establish such new rules, and to make such additional arrangements from time to time, on the recommendation of the Manufacturers

nufacturers, as shall be judged for the general interest of the trade, and for the great and primary purpose of extending the sales and the consumption.---To appropriate a room in the buildings, for the public papers of the trade ; and to assist the Manufacturers in procuring those legislative protections and aids, which from time to time may be necessary and beneficial.

The British Delegates are authorized to state, that these conditions will not meet any objection on the part of those respectable individuals who have declared their intentions to carry this important plan into execution, provided it shall be considered by the great body of the Callico and Muslin Manufacturers as *a public good* ; and by the British Government as *a national benefit*.

Every facility which can be derived from the highest and most respectable establishment that ever was devised, for the advantage of the inland commerce of any country, will be attached to this design.

The British Cotton Goods will not only be disseminated over all Europe through the medium of this scheme, but from the very moderate

derate expence attending the sales;---from the certain footing upon which the Manufacturer will stand with regard to the returns;---from the exemption from risque;---from the quick circulation of money upon the most solid footing;---from the great saving in point of interest and commission on bills, and various other charges not applicable to, or affecting this scheme, there is not a doubt but the British Manufactures can be afforded at a much lower price than at present, while the Manufacturer may enjoy the same profit. And hence it follows, that by exhibiting these Manufactures at reduced prices, those foreigners who lay out immense sums yearly in East India Cotton Goods, and who have been restrained heretofore from purchasing the British, on account of the difficulty of finding a great aggregate together, and of being able to pay such prices as the heavy expences of the Manufacturers obliged them to put upon them, will now find it their interest to come forward. And there can be no doubt but the superior fancy and execution of the British weavers, joined to the facility with which they can turn their hands to the modes and fashions of all Europe, as soon as a proper channel is opened, will give them advantages which must

unquestionably promote such a vend as could never take place by any other means. And from the daily improvements which an undisturbed prosecution of this branch of trade would enable the Manufacturers to make, by means of certain sales without risque, and at a very limited expence, there can be no doubt of such further reductions in the price of British Cotton Goods, as would convince the whole World, that it was in vain to attempt to stand in competition with this country, in the Cotton Manufacture; and hence it would be rivetted and fixed in Great Britain for ages to come.

It is impossible to estimate the advantages in the consumption of every article of trade which results from such a reduction, in the price, as shall bring it within the reach of the common people. The improvements in British Callicoes and Muslins, printed and plain, is a strong proof of this observation, as they have become the dress of the lower ranks all over Great Britain. Let it once be known on the Continent of Europe, that every article of decent apparel, necessary for the lower ranks of females, can be furnished, of a beautiful fabric, at a sum not exceeding Fifteen Shillings, and the consumption will be immense.

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The national prosperity will of course rise, in proportion to this consumption.

But the apparent resources of the proposed system go beyond almost any conception that can be formed, of a great public design, which has not been tried, and as yet rests merely on speculation.

It would certainly remove every prejudice which has been entertained most unjustly, and which has been too industriously propagated, respecting the quality of British Goods. It will shew the World, that they are infinitely better wove, and more beautifully fancied, than the similar fabrics of India. It will convince the purchasers, that they are to expect new and rapid improvements; and hence they will be invited to come over with their money, and even to lodge orders for that species of goods which is best adapted to their consumption.

By such a general exhibition, the ingenious Manufacturer, who brings forward an excellent article, will be doubly rewarded, by bringing his goods under the review of a great body of people, whose competition will give him the advantage of a better price, and whose
name

name will be known in a wide and extended circle, giving a stimulus to ingenuity and industry, extremely beneficial to the country.

Such are the outlines of the design which the Delegates now presume to recommend to the attention of the Owners of Cotton Mills, and Manufacturers of Calicoes and Muslins in Great Britain;—in whose behalf they have solicited the establishment of this great and important institution, and on whose application, if made soon, to the Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council for Trade, it will probably take place. But if any delay occurs, it will be lost to the Manufacturers, and to the country.

The Delegates, therefore, do most earnestly entreat their Constituents, to meet as early as possible on this business, and to send to the Lords of His Majesty's Privy Council for Trade, their Observations upon the whole System; that in case the great utility of the design shall meet their approbation, no time may be lost in procuring a Royal Charter, without which nothing can be done.

London, 3 June, 1788.

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